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Jour 1501, 11/10/18

Game Community Study Assignment

In this paper, we will examine *Destiny: The Game*’s online community through the use of the official Destiny site. One aspect of this community is the online forum designed to facilitate discussions over the current state of the game (new topics are explored with every update to the game), point out glitches, and give general feedback that developers can explore and potentially patch/fix. The community also has an LFG subsection where players can find teams (called fireteams) for in-game activities such as 6v6/4v4 competitive player vs. player (PvP) modes, and 6-person player vs. environment (PvE) raid teams. When looking through the LFG subsection of the community, there are evident cases of team creation through the lens of one’s status. Status, in *Destiny*, is defined in two areas: kill/death ratio for PvP activities, and the number of activity completions (raid, strikes) for PvE activities. Thus, many players that make an LFG post have requirements where they are looking for other high-caliber players, while “lower-tier” players are usually kicked from these groups. The forum side, however, is a different story. Players who have genuinely good questions are met with rapid and constructive answers, posts notifying players of issues/glitches in the game are praised for their usefulness, and discussions aimed at possible game changes/future content additions are taken into serious consideration by other players and even the developers. While the LFG and forum sides of the community differ in many aspects, they do offer critical analyses of gaming through the scope of scholarly material.

On several occasions when analyzing Destiny’s forum community, I came across posts aimed at either recruiting members to join a clan or posts from players who are looking for clans themselves. One post by a player, for example, asked to find an active clan that specializes in higher-level activities. This post was met by four separate clan invites. Another post welcomed new players to join their clan in what was labeled a “stress-free” environment. This post also had many player requests to join. These kinds of clan posts, in essence, are aimed at gathering a vast number of players (max 100) in order to have the same members play with one another, help one another, and hopefully become friends with one another. This directly ties into the idea that games can lead to stronger social networks, the belief that “compared with games, reality is disconnected…games build stronger bonds and lead to more active social networks” *(McGonigal, Reality is Broken, p.82).* The creation of clans makes this belief a reality, since players who join a clan will continuously play together in the various activities offered by the game. In addition to clan posts….